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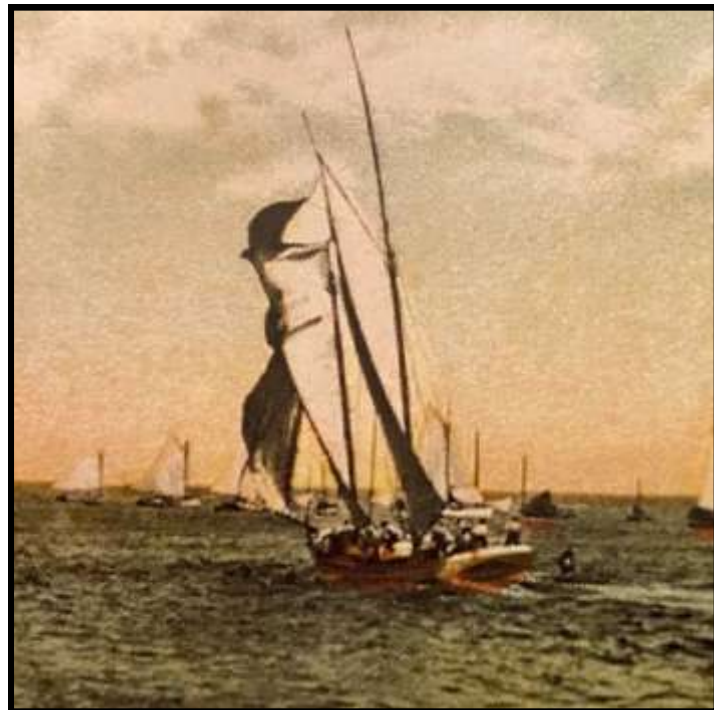
February 2025

## COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The monthly luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, February 20, 2025, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speakers will be Ralph Holloway, who will speak on law enforcement. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 228-467-4090. **Please call by noon on Wednesday, February 19** to make your reservation in order to help us plan seating which is limited to forty-eight people and to apprise us of the number of lunches to order. **Served at noon, lunch is \$15.00 for members and \$17.00 for non-members**, payable at the door. The catering order is submitted on Wednesday morning prior to the luncheon on Thursday. If you need to cancel your reservation, please call by 2 p.m. on Tuesday prior to the luncheon if at all possible so that the society does not incur unnecessary expenses. It is catered by Almost Home Catering, Michelle Nichols, chef. The lunch menu is hamburger steaks, yellow rice, salad, yeast rolls, and raspberry white chocolate cupcakes.

## MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues in the Hancock County Historical Society are due each January. Membership for an individual is \$30 per year, and for a family they are \$50 per year. Dues may be paid by credit card at our website, or you may send a check to Hancock County Historical Society, P.O. Box 3356, Bay St. Louis MS, 39521



Schooners were the important sailing vessels along the Gulf Coast in the early 19th century in what was called the "Carrying Trade." These sailboats carried passengers and vital cargo between ports because there were no roads or trains in Hancock County

## THE DOBY PLANTATION

By

James Keating, M.D.

At the turn of the Nineteenth Century, there were only approximately two hundred settlers in Hancock County. Many of these French-speaking men and women lived in the Pearl River Valley. This neighbor-

hood had caught the imagination of French emigrants who had come to New Orleans to seek their fortune. A schooner is a sailing vessel with two masts and these sailboats traveled along the coast between Mobile and New Orleans carrying passengers and cargo for purchase or sale in what was called the "carrying trade."

One such ambitious Frenchman was Jean Baptiste D'auby (1770-1836) who came from Marseille France around 1795. He met, and shortly there-

## THE

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James Keating, Publisher

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**LOBRANO HOUSE  
HOURS**

MONDAY — FRIDAY  
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**CLOSED 12—1 (lunch)**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

“TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF HANCOCK COUNTY AND TO PRESERVE THE KATE LOBRANO HOUSE AND COLLECTIONS THEREIN; TO RESEARCH AND INTERPRET LIFE IN HANCOCK COUNTY; AND TO ENCOURAGE AN APPRECIATION OF AND INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION.”

after, married Marie Jeanne Giraud (1772-c. 1852) in 1796. Her family lived in St. Bernard Parish. After his marriage, he worked on schooners up and down the Gulf Coast. In time, he amassed enough money to buy his own schooner. On one such trip, while visiting a friend in Biloxi, Jean discovered a piece of land while fishing and determined to homestead the property.

This tract of land Jean liked was on Cowan Bayou which drains into the Pearl River not far from the southern boundary of the future town of Pearlinton. In 1809, Jean received his Spanish land grant and moved his family, several slaves, and three schooners to Hancock County. There on Cowan Bayou, he built a plantation house under the direction of a New Orleans architect. It is presumed the building was similar in design to the Laurel Wood Plantation that was located downriver a few miles built by the Saucier Family. Adjacent to the house, Jean built a shipping dock by called “Doby Point” for his small fleet of schooners and catboats. The plantation grew cotton, but he also planted pecan orchards, orange, fig, and cherry trees. Jean also raised cattle on the 1,280-acre plantation.

The family was Catholic. Jean and Marie had five children. He was an intelligent man with a good business sense who probably came to this country with some resources. He did own slaves, but according to newspaper articles, written by Doby descendants it was his policy never to sell any of his slaves or break up a family. These family slaves and their descendants stayed with the family as

employees after the War Between the States. Some of these Black men and women adopted the Doby name and are a source of stories about the family. These Black descendants can now be found in the Picayune, MS, area. According to oral tradition, Jean was an accomplished sailor and a skilled woodsman. His schooners required maintenance and repair. The family loved to play chess and were avid readers. Jean had pretty blue eyes and the women in the family were self-educated and often served the community as teachers. The family was considered “cultured and influential.”

The Doby Family intermarried with many of the other “cultured and influential” families in the lower Pearl River Valley. Jean and his son-in-law, Francisco Antonio Netto, owned a small fleet of schooners and participated in various business endeavors with the other ambitious entrepreneurs in Pearlinton, Logtown, and Gainesville. These early settlers were Catholic and had plenty of children. These children married into the various local well-to-do families and the Doby Family Tree of descendants includes family names such as Koch, Casanova, Netto, Orr, Hursey, Russ, and Lott. Business partners and neighbors included members of the White, Poitevent, and Favre clans.

The fourth child of Jean and Marie was Jeanne Florentine D’auby (1803-1858). She married Francisco Antonio Netto (c. 1780-1836) who was a Spanish emigrant who came over from Spain in his own schooner called “Seven Sisters.” In the early 1800’s he owned three schoon-



The cemetery at the site of the old Doby Plantation is the sacred resting place of many Doby ancestors who lived there in the 19th century. Only a few headstones and a piece of the iron fence have survived.



A large headstone in the Doby Cemetery belongs to Sarah Splitly (1834-1888). It is believed that Sarah was a mulatto neighbor who was a devoted caregiver of a Doby child named Eliza who died in 1853 at an early age of a protracted illness.

ers—"Hope," "Jealous," and "President." Francisco fought in the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 with General Andrew Jackson. Francisco and Florentine had nine children. They lived on the Doby Plantation and are buried in the Doby Cemetery. Jean and Francisco were in the "carrying trade" business together. They had a fleet of schooners that docked at "Doby Point" on Cowan Bayou. It is estimated that Pearlinton grew in population in 1810 to 1840 from two hundred to one thousand inhabitants. The town of Pearlinton was booming and was the busiest port on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Jean and Francisco were making good money carrying passengers and cargo to and from the Pearl River ports.

One of the children of Francisco and Florentino was Annette "Nettie" Netto (1825-1886) who married Captain Christian D.T. Koch. He was a seaman who sailed to Europe and the Caribbean Sea islands also in the "carrying trade." This family is important to coun-

ty historians because a treasure trove of letters between Nettie and Christian during Civil War has been preserved detailing the life of a Logtown family. Christian and Nettie are buried in the small Koch Cemetery near the Logtown Cemetery.

Another second-generation member of this important Doby Family was Thomas "Tom" D'auby, Sr. (1804-1852). He married Josephine Arambura in 1832, a native of Pensacola, Florida. Thomas inherited much of the family estate but met a tragic and untimely death on the Doby Plantation near the Francisco Netto house. It seems that the horse he was riding was spooked by a group of pigs near a large oak tree. The horse threw Tom, and he apparently broke his neck as he fell against the large oak tree. It is presumed Tom and Josephine are buried in the Doby Cemetery.

Another second-generation child of Jean and Marie was Louis Baptiste D'auby (1800-1866). He lived

all his life on the old Doby Place and is buried in the family cemetery on the estate. Louis never married. After his father, Jean, died, Louis took over Doby Place and kept it going. A succession inventory made by a neighbor and family friend, Samuel White (namesake for White Bayou), in December 1850 includes two sections of land (1,280 acres), plus 224 Head of cattle, eight slaves, and a schooner, "Elizabeth." David Wingate bought the cattle for \$2,069 and William Poitevent, E.F. Russ, and O. Favre paid \$4,900 for the slaves.

In the third generation of the Doby Family, Thomas "Tom Jr." Doby (1833-1863) resided at the old Doby Place. He married Maria "Pamela" Callejas in 1861. Tom Jr. also met an early death. Tom Jr. enlisted in the Confederate



forces at Meridian, MS, and died in the Battle of Vicksburg in 1863. Tom Jr. and Pamela had only one child named Charles Thomas “Boy” Doby (1862-1935). He married Secessia Ezida Liamdias. They lived on the old Doby Place. They had six children, one of whom was Edgar Joseph Doby (1895-1968). He reared a child, Audrey Doby Dupont (1923-1984) who bore Thomas Edward Dupont, Sr. (b. 1950) who is a Marine and father of Thomas Edwin Dupont, Jr., who is the father of Jack Thomas Dupont (b. 2008).

The reader has probably noticed that there are different spellings of the family name. After the first two generations, this author has modernized the old French version of “D’auby” to “Doby.” During the 1850’s many cotton planters moved to the Natchez area because the soil there was more fertile. This was the time that the Doby Plantation began to be called the old Doby place.

The eighth generation of the Doby Family is fortunate to boast of a precious lad named Jack Dupont. He and his cousin, Dianne Doby Merrill and Jack’s grandfather, Thomas Edwin Dupont, Sr., along with other relatives and community members, formed a non-profit corporation called the Friends of the Doby Cemetery. The cemetery has been neglected for years and until recently was little more than an overgrown forgotten patch of ground cover by a strand of large, ancient oak trees. These Doby descendants engaged in meticulous restoration projects such as repairing grave markers ensuring the cemetery’s significance was preserved. Buried at this old cemetery are



Thomas Edward Dupont, Sr., and his grandson, Jack Dupont, are restoring the old Doby Plantation cemetery on Cowan Bayou near Pearllington.

Indians, a Civil War soldier, documented slaves, and family ancestors. Unfortunately, the cemetery suffered losses of head stones during the post-Civil War era, many of which had been stolen, included that of Jean Baptiste. The family’s legacy persisted through the narratives and stories of some of the slaves and the descendants of Jean and Marie and was passed down through seven generations. This outstanding descendant, Jack Dupont, who incidentally is a member of the Hancock County Historical Society, said “The ongoing effects of organizations like the Friends of the Doby Cemetery ensure that the Doby Family’s legacy remains not just a memory, but a living testament to the enduring spirit of a community bound by history.”

#### SOURCES

Dupont, Jack. Personal interview. April 27, 2024.

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Grave of Sarah Splitley,” Personal Communication, October 22, 2002, *Vertical Files*. Hancock County Historical Society, Bay St. Louis, MS.

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Merrill, Dianne Doby. Personal Interview, January 17, 2025 .



## SIMON FAVRE THE INDISPENSABLE MAN

By  
James Keating MD

In the second half of the Eighteenth Century the Gulf Coast was in a period of transition both politically and economically. During this Colonial Period of our history this land called West Florida was transferred from France to Great Britain in 1763, and then to Spain in 1783. The Pearl River Valley looked attractive to potential settlers, but the threat of attacks from Indians, pirates, or robbers as well as the unreliability of land claims discouraged migration. This state of relative chaos was recognized by all the various players in this drama, but skilled local leadership was needed to facilitate the inevitable annexation by the United States of the Gulf Coast. In these precarious but crucial times an "indispensable man" was needed like George Washington in the founding of the United States. Simon Favre was the "indispensable man" in this chapter of Hancock History.

Simon Favre was born in Mobile in 1760. His father, Jean Claude Favre (1721-1782) learned the Choctaw Muskogean language from his father, Jean Baptiste Favre. This family earned a good reputation as interpreters because they were educated and natural linguists who enjoyed living with the local Choctaw Indians. In 1763 Jean Claude was the translator at the assemblies between the French, British, and local Indians to explain the change of dominion of West Florida. Jean Claude received a land grant of five hundred acres on the Pearl River at the site of the future town of Napoleon. Jean Claude was the first non-Native Indian resident in this region of the East Pearl Riv-

er. Jean Claude married Marguerite Wietz (1740-1805) from Mobile. The Favres were a respected family in Mobile and quite involved with the local politics. They were well educated for the times and responsible for much oral and written correspondence with the various governments and Indian chiefs.

Simon was a successful entrepreneur or businessman who owned a schooner with a crew of around seven experienced seamen who were probably black slaves. Simon owned several pieces of land and was a land speculator. He raised cattle on his land and operated a cotton gin in Pearlington. He probably grew some cotton on his plantation, but evolved as an important middle man for the cotton supply chain produced on plantations upriver. After ginning, the cotton would be sold in New Orleans. At the site of the future town of Napoleon he had a store. After his death in 1813 his estate recorded fifty-six slaves, 225 head of cattle, fifty horses, one schooner, and 5000 acres of land, for total assets of \$20,000. Indeed, Simon was described at the time as an educated planter with a diversified portfolio who conducted business all along the coast from New Orleans to Mobile in the first decade of the Nineteenth Century.

Simon married Celeste Rochon (1777-1840) in 1801 in Mobile, and they moved to Pearlington in 1804. They had six children. Simon reputedly had seven other children from three previ-

ous mistresses.

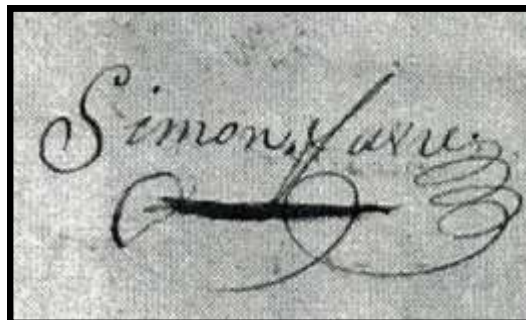
The strategic location of the East Pearl River as the boundary of the USA (after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803) and Spanish West Florida gave Simon control of the inland communication between these two local governments. He was more than an interpreter, but an intermediary. The Spanish government made Simon Commandant of the Pearl River area, instrumental in the assignment of land grants. After the United States annexed West Florida, Simon switched allegiance seamlessly from Spain to the United States. Consequently, Dr. William Flood, on behalf of Governor William Claiborne, made Simon Justice of the Peace for the Pearl River Valley. Simon was described in Flood's report "as a planter, owns a large stock, and is an educated and very respectable man." Simon died in 1813.

In present day Hancock County there are many inhabitants with the surname Favre. One very famous and beloved direct descendant of Simon is Brett Favre. Brett was the great quarterback of the Green Bay Packers that was recently inducted into the Football Hall of Fame in 2016.

### SOURCES:

Heitzmann, Jerry, and Cassibry, Nap, II. *The Favre Family*. Biloxi: Mississippi Coast Historical and Genealogical Society, 1989.

"Simon Favre." *Vertical Files*. Hancock County Historical Society. Bay St. Louis, MS.



The signature of Simon Favre as it appears on the document for the exchange of slaves from him to Rebecca Austin dated May 24, 1801





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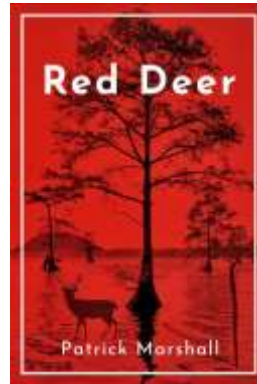
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